by raising the indigenous production;

(d) whether there is any proposal to set up some more petrochemical; industries in the country in the rural areas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the sites selected therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS (DR. CHINTA MOHAN): (a) to (c). The Government are continuously monitoring production and availability of pesticides and taking steps like additional licensing, better availability of raw materials, etc. for enhanced production of pesticides. In order to ensure timely and adequate supplies of pesticides, Department of Agriculture & Corporation convenes meetings with States/ Union Territories. In the event of short supplies of any pesticides, concerned manufacturers are advised to ensure supplies of these items to the concerned State to overcome the problem.

(d) and (e). Setting up of petro-chemical units in the country is an on-going process and proposals are recommended based on techno-economic considerations. Under the new industrial licensing policy, a large number of petro-chemicals items are now exempt from licensing provisions. In such cases entrepreneurs need only to file a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government.

Petro-Chemical Industries in Maharashtra

4482. SHRI VILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposals to set-up petrochemicals industries in public and private sectors at various places in Maharashtra are lying pending at various stages with the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c)the stages at which these proposals are lying pending; and

(d) the measures being adopted for according speedy approval to these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. CHINTA MOHAN):(a) to (d).Applications for industrial licence for the manufacture of various petro-chemicals which still require licensing, including those of projects proposed to be located in Maharashtra, are received from time to time. These are examined and decided upon on techno-economic considerations, in line with existing polices, as a continues process.

[*Translation*]

Increase in the Price of Arhar

4483. SHRI VILASRAO NAGANTHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the continuous increase in the price of Arhar; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for reducing the prices thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI) (a) and (b). The increase in prices of Arhar is mainly due to the fact that domestic production has not kept pace with the domestic demand. Necessary measures have been taken to increase production of pulses in the country. Their availability is also being augmented by imports, pulses being on Open General Licence.